

### Remarks

In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, reconsideration of the rejection and further examination are requested.

Claims 1-10 have been previously presented. New claim 11 has been added.

Claims 1-10 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Goldowsky (US 5,066,512) in view of JP 11-218691.

Claim 1 has been amended so as to further distinguish the present invention, as recited therein, from the references relied upon in the rejection. As a result, the above-mentioned rejection is submitted to be inapplicable to the pending claims for the following reasons.

Claim 1 is patentable over the combination of Goldowsky and JP 11-218691, since claim 1 recites a droplet operation device for biological and/or medical analysis including, in part, a plurality of electrode units arranged on an insulating substrate, the electrode units for controlling movement and stoppage of a droplet; and a unit that applies an electric field to the electrode units so as to control the droplet on the surface of the insulating layer. The combination of Goldowsky and JP 11-218691 fails to disclose or suggest these features of claim 1.

Goldowsky discloses an apparatus 10 for the deposition of dyes to create a color filter matrix. The apparatus 10 includes a glass substrate 28 supporting a plurality of discrete isolated pel areas 29, 30 and 31 each coated with an ITO coating area 32. During the operation of the apparatus 10, blue dye droplets 26 are formed in a mist by a mist generator 11 and positively charged. The apparatus 10 also applies a negative charge to the pel areas 30 and a positive charge to the pel areas 29 and 31. As the positively charged blue dye droplets 26 in the air approach the pel areas 29, 30 and 31 from above, they are repulsed from the positively charged pel areas 29 and 31, and are attracted to and settle on the pel areas 30. (See column 5, line 34 – column 6, line 19 and Figure 1).

In the rejection, the pel areas 29, 30 and 31 are relied upon as corresponding to the claimed electrode units. As discussed above, the charges of the pel areas 29, 30 and 31 are controlled to cause the deposition of the blue dye droplets 26 on the pel areas 30. However, it is apparent that the pel areas 29, 30 and 31 are not controlled to control the droplets 26 on the surface of an insulating layer. In other words, the pel areas 29, 30 and 31 exert no control over the droplets 26 once the droplets 26 are on the pel areas 30.

Further, JP 11-218691 discloses a liquid drop operating device having a water repellent substrate 11 with a number of hydrophilic sections 41-43 for holding liquid drops 31-34 in a stationary position. The liquid drop operating device also has a pH electrode 61 and an ion electrode 62 located on the water repellent substrate 11. (See paragraph [0009] – [0011] and Figure 1).

Based on the above discussion, it is apparent that JP 11-218691 discloses that the pH electrode 61 and the ion electrode 62 are located on the water repellent substrate 11. However, as admitted in the rejection, it is clear from Figure 1 that JP 11-218691 fails to disclose or suggest a plurality of electrode units that are arranged on an insulating substrate, the electrode units for controlling movement and stoppage of a droplet, and a unit that applies an electric field to the electrode units so as to control the droplet on a surface of an insulating layer. This is apparent since the hydrophilic sections 41-43 are specifically designed to hold the liquid drops 31-34 stationary. Therefore, the combination of Goldowsky and JP 11-218691 fails to disclose or suggest the present invention as recited in claim 1.

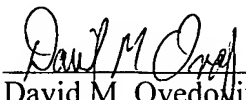
Further, the apparatus 10 of Goldowsky relates to the deposition of various colored inks to create a color filter matrix to be used in liquid crystal display (LCD) devices. On the other hand, the device of JP 11-218691 relates to a device for capturing liquid drops for optical analysis via an optical measuring unit. In the rejection, it is indicated that it would have been obvious to combine the optical measuring unit of JP 11-218691 with the apparatus 10 of Goldowsky because it could be used in the medical field. However, the apparatus 10 of Goldowsky is explicitly disclosed as being for the creation of color filter matrices, which is a completely different technology. Therefore, it would not have been obvious to combine any of the features of the device of JP 11-218691 with the apparatus 10 of Goldowsky in an attempt to meet the limitations recited in claim 1.

Because of the above-mentioned distinctions, it is believed clear that claims 1-11 are allowable over the references relied upon in the rejection. Furthermore, it is submitted that the distinctions are such that a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention would not have been motivated to make any combination of the references of record in such a manner as to result in, or otherwise render obvious, the present invention as recited in claims 1-11. Therefore, it is submitted that claims 1-11 are clearly allowable over the prior art of record.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is submitted that the present application is now in condition for allowance. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that there are issues remaining which must be resolved before allowance of the application.

Respectfully submitted,

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November 17, 2008